

ahead today, and then maybe moving it to Final Reading, and talking about community corrections and boot camps, and making ourselves feel good about that, we have not. This is the first small step in a very long and arduous process that we are all going to have to be involved in across the State of Nebraska to make sure this system is reformed and progressive and works for the people of the State of Nebraska. And I hope that when we pass, and 627 is just a fond memory, that we have made the long-term commitment to deal with these issues regularly, consistently, year in and year out because they will not go away, and we should not let them go away. I urge the support of the body in the ideas behind 627, as it now stands. The day will come, down the road, for future consideration of some of those amendments offered by Senator Witek. She will have a chance, and we will have a chance at some point down the road to discuss those issues, but I think 627 as it sits is a good bill with a good idea. It is the beginning of a long process that we ought to embark upon. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Hohenstein. I would like to make an announcement to the senators. The doughnuts being passed around this afternoon are in honor of Senator Elmer, who was a grandparent last evening for the sixth time. Congratulations to Senator Elmer. Thank you. Senator Pedersen, followed by Senators Chambers and Witek. Senator Pedersen.

SENATOR PEDERSEN: Madam President and members of the Legislature, once again I would talk to this issue a little bit and talk a little bit about youth, and I am talking about adolescent youth in trouble. The problem we have with gangs and self-esteem. I personally don't believe that we will ever do away with gangs, and in some cases, I hope we don't. But it is the behavior that we need to look at changing in gangs. There's three things that each and everyone of us want and adolescents would seem to want it more than anybody, and that is to be, first of all, important. And look at us in this room, how important we think we are at times, but we all want to be important, in adolescence more so. We all want to be part of, want to be accepted into some group, and we all want to feel like we are worth something. These young people, in a lot of cases of single parent families, go to the gangs to get this because that parent is too busy working or one thing or another to take care of the child. They get involved in some activity and some crime that isn't always the real serious crime. We do have a place, the idea of jail, that Senator Crosby was talking